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REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration of the final rejection based on the following comments on the claims and the references.

Summary of Telephone Interview with Examiner

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy of an interview on November 22, 2004.

At the interview, the Baker and Jones references were discussed in relation to independent claims 1, 29, 33 and 47. At the interview, no express agreement was reached. However, the Examiner requested that the Applicants submit their arguments in writing so that he may consider them further. The following comments may serve as a further summary of the interview.

Rejections of the Claims

Applicants contend that the references do not show, either alone or in combination, all features of the claim and the case is therefore in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 is rejected based on Baker in view of Jones. However, those references do not show or suggest all of the claimed features. For example, they do not teach generating a tag from the directory of entities as claimed.

Baker describes a "unique reusable envelope" (column 1, lines 26-27). A bar code is pre-printed on the front of the reusable envelope. In one embodiment, a user writes an address on the envelope, which is then read by destination imager 29 and interpreted by image interpreter 31 (col. 4, lines 20-24). Another embodiment is described in which a user enters destination information directly from a computer key pad (col. 1, lines 48-49). However, both embodiments generate information that is stored in database 27 (col. 4, lines 57-61). In neither embodiment does the system of the reference show a system that uses a directory of entities "to generate the TAG for each item "

Jones does not relate to the delivery of mail in an interoffice environment and therefore does not provide any teaching of a directory of entities within the organization or the generation of the tags therefrom.

Claim 29 is rejected based on Jones in view of Baker. Though Jones describes the use of emails, the reference does not describe the claim limitation requiring the system to comprise "a

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plug-in for an email system in the organization." Jones does not describe an email processing system operating within an organization. Further, the reference provides no teaching that would motivate one of skill in the art to generate email messages other than through existing interfaces, such as using the simple mail transfer protocol (SMTP) to directly send e-mails from a program running on a computer with a network connection. Neither reference shows or suggests the integration of physical and electronic mail handling within the organization according to the method of the claim.

Claim 33 is rejected based on Baker in view of Jones. Applicants contend that the references do not show "a fourth mechanism by which the system, utilizing the record for an item, obtains an input from an authorized system user relating to the item and redirects the path of the item in response to the input while it is in transit." Baker describes routing of mail to destinations in a recipient information database. The reference describes using a recipient information database 33 to set the routing for a mail item to the current mail stop of the addressee. However, the routing information comes from a database, not from user input. Further, the information is used to set the routing of the item, not redirect the path of the item in response to user input while the item is in transit.

Jones does not provide a teaching for the missing elements. Jones relates to a system and method for advance notification of delivery. It does not describe re-routing of items in response to user input as claimed. Accordingly, the references do not show or teach the claimed invention.

Claim 47 is rejected based on Jones in view of Baker. The claim recites an interface to a "commercial carrier software system." The claim additionally requires that "carrier tracking numbers are entered in the memory...for mail items to be shipped...by the commercial carrier." Applicants contend that there is no motivation to combine the interdepartmental mail sorting system of Baker with the system of Jones. Further, even if the two systems were combined, Applicants disagree that the resulting system would meet the claim limitation. In particular, there is no reason to believe that the combination of references would result in an interface through which the carrier tracking numbers are entered into the memory of the interoffice mail system.

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Applicant's maintain their position that the dependent claims add further patentable features. However, these arguments are not repeated in this response so as not to duplicate matter presented in the Amendment filed June 2, 2004.

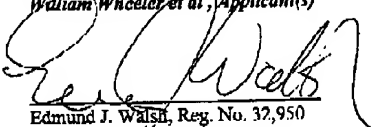
CONCLUSION

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the case in condition for allowance.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Respectfully submitted,
William Wheeler et al., Applicant(s)

By:


Edmund J. Walsh, Reg. No. 32,950
Wolf, Greenfield & Sacks, P.C.
600 Atlantic Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02210-2206
Telephone: (617) 646-8000

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